First-hand information

Living in security

A report from the GDR

1978 edition

First-hand information

Living in security

A report from the GDR

PANORAMA DDR

Published by PANORAMA GDR — Auslandspresseagentur GmbH
"First-hand information" Department
DDR — 1054 Berlin, Wilhelm Pieck Strasse 49
Copy deadline: January 1978
Translation: Intertext Berlin
Verlag Zeit im Bild, DDR — 801 Dresden, Julian Grimau Allee
Printed in the German Democratic Republic
by Grafischer Grossbetrieb Völkerfreundschaft Dresden
7062-2

Summary of contents

I. The basic conditions for a secure life 7
Economic and social policies belong together
The right to work · A growth in real income · Security for all our citizens · A comprehensive social welfare programme · A home for every family · National insurance under trade union control · What are the advantages of the voluntary supplementary insurance scheme?

II. Care and protection at work 18
How everybody helped write the Labour Code · A guaranteed job · Social wage policy · Health protection and industrial safety · Health centres in the factories · Catering facilities · In trade union hands · Care during illness · How much sick pay do you get? · Insurance coverage for social activities

III. Special protection for mothers and children 33
Easing the burdens on working women · The advantages of family planning · Care for pregnant mothers · Employment rights for working mothers · Child care in kindergartens and creches · Schoolchildren in good hands · What is done to help large families?

IV. Assistance to other groups of citizens 43
Support for young married couples · Social welfare for the handicapped · Security in old age · National insurance pensions · What kinds of pensions are paid?

Documentation 53

Everybody sees certain social guarantees as an essential part of life. Everybody wants and expects real opportunities to develop their physical and intellectual talents, to work and to play a part in determining the course which society is to take. It is perfectly normal to want to reach and keep a suitable living standard for oneself and one's family, to expect to be looked after in the case of an accident and to look forward to an interesting old age without financial difficulties.

The extent to which elementary requirements such as these are met with conditions citizens' attitudes to the state and society in which they live. The socialist countries, and among them the GDR, have succeeded in creating a permanent system of social protections which attracts considerable attention from citizens of capitalist countries who want to find out more about developments in socialist countries, or who simply come to our country on a visit.

For this reason we want to introduce our readers to the most important areas of social protection enjoyed by citizens of the GDR and to explain some of the measures taken. We hope this booklet will provide a useful summary of the way in which planned construction of socialist society also creates the basis for a system of real social security.

I. The basic conditions for a secure life

Berlin, the capital of the GDR, is luckier than most other European capitals in its beautiful surroundings. Their particular charm lies in the countless rivers and lakes and broad stretches of forest. And so the villages and towns around Berlin are a natural location for Berliners to spend their recreation. Eichwalde, between Berlin and Königs Wusterhausen, is one of the places, and it is here that the Schneider family live.

The Schneiders are a working-class family, like many others in Eichwalde. As regards their work and everyday life, their intellectual and cultural interests and their financial situation, they can be considered typical of a working-class family in the GDR. Gerhard Schneider (48) is a skilled worker in Berlin's nationally-owned tyre factory; his wife Marianne (45) is also a skilled worker, and she works in Eichwalde at a nationally-owned firm of interior decorators. Their son Jürgen (22) is a mechanic in the Heinrich Rau heavy machinery plant in Wildau. Daughter Sabine (10) is doing her fourth year of school at the comprehensive polytechnical school in Eichwalde.

The Schneider family rent a house with a garden. They also possess a light grey Trabant, a car produced in the GDR which is very economical to run and so a popular buy. It is therefore true when Frau Schneider, asked how the family is, answers: "We're all fine. We've got jobs we like and we earn pretty well from them. We live comfortably, but cheaply too. The children's schooling and training is taken care of.

With the right sort of budgeting we can fulfil all our wishes sooner or later. We haven't got to worry about tomorrow."

The Schneiders are not just proud of what they have already achieved. They can also be sure that they will be able to carry on making a rich and worthwhile family life as a result of their work. The very idea of either Gerhard or Marianne losing their jobs and with it their contribution to the family income is strange to them, and so too is the thought that their children's education might one day be put at risk. Problems like that have been overcome in the GDR. What are the reasons for this?

Economic and social policies belong together

As a result of socialist construction and the institution of people's sovereignty, stable social relations were created in the GDR that guaranteed certain material benefits for each citizen. After all, the whole point of socialism is that everything should be done in the people's interests. The economy develops to the advantage of the individual, its aim being to satisfy his or her constantly growing material and cultural needs more and more effectively. Everybody gains from what is produced.

This relationship between economic development and individual needs is the main explanation for our citizens' security. It is the declared aim of the leading party of the GDR, the Working-class Socialist Unity Party of Germany (SED), to preserve this unity of economic and social policy strictly, as Erich Honecker, General Secretary of the SED Central Comittee, indicated at the Party's 9th Congress in May 1976: "Our Party will continue to focus all its energies on ensuring that increase in performances, advances in production and the growing introduction of scientific and technological innovations benefit the working class and all other working people, that living standards are raised further and that our entire intellectual and cultural life is made ever richer in content."

The guarantees that the GDR is able to offer its citizens

are no accidental side-effect of socialist economic policy, but rather a firm component of the SED's strategic programme. The produced national income (gross social product), which has been rising annually according to plan from the very beginning (27,000 million marks in 1950, 148,000 million marks in 1976) and industrial goods production, which has multiplied almost eight times in the same period, are the economic foundations of our comprehensive social welfare policy. It should also be emphasized that the growth in the GDR's economic strength was particularly significant and consistent in the 70s.

Like the overwhelming majority of families in the GDR, the Schneider family have been able to experience for themselves that good work and its economic results are worth the effort. This is not only visible in their steadily growing income, but also in the stability of prices and the many opportunities our citizens have to develop their talents and skills.

The right to work

As socialists we believe it is wrong to talk of "social security" for as long as the right to work is not extended to every member of society. It is at work that the individual earns money to live, develops talents and personality and takes a place in society.

The basic right to work is guaranteed for GDR citizens in their Constitution and is taken for granted. We have never had unemployment and never will. Our freedom from exploitation brought with it the social ownership of the means of production. This has meant a new social status for working people: they are no longer simply producers, but also joint owners and executors of power. Their work is free, creative activity which contributes to the constant increase in social wealth to the benefit of society and each individual within it.

In our working world, the right to work is closely bound

up with other basic civil rights; the right to take part in decision-making and planning matters relating to production and improving workplace conditions, the right to further education and training, to health care and the protection of physical and intellectual skills, to leisure and recreation. For a GDR citizen the right to work does not just mean a guaranteed job. Working conditions must also be fit for humans: the state and society pay continued attention to improving them and every worker and trade union shares in determining this process. The socialist performance principle (to each according to his work) ensures that the growing social wealth which results from work goes hand in hand with the individual's growing share in new prosperity.

And so the GDR's socialist factories and offices are not mere workshops. They are an area of life where the employees feel their personalities confirmed, where they carry out their democratic right to participate in making decisions, where relationships are characterized by mutual help and friendliness, and where personal and financial support are offered to the sick, the disabled and the elderly.

A growth in real income

One important way in which the living standards of the population are ensured here is through the constant increase in real income. This is the result of the growing efficiency of our economy, which is planned and directed at state level.

The average monthly income of a worker in our socialist economy was 555 marks in 1960, 755 marks in 1970 and 929 marks in 1976. A further systematic increase in net money income is planned which should mean another rise of 20 to 22 per cent by 1980 (compared with 1975). In 1977 alone, incomes rose by 5.4 per cent. The working people receive the full value of this increase since our state's price policy guarantees the stable purchasing power of the mark. If the index for retail prices and service and transport costs is

taken as 100 in 1970, in 1976 it was 98.4. Basic food prices, rents and fares have not changed for over 20 years.

One important factor in the increase in real income is the money increasingly made available for the people's prosperity out of social funds. This is what has come to be known as the second pay packet, which considerably relieves the financial burdens of every family, and has become a reliable part of real family income.

The social funds are growing proportionately faster than the wage funds, their purpose being to help iron out any social differences which still exist and to promote relations of equality. This money is used for social purposes such as free medical care and social welfare, keeping the prices of everyday goods stable, maintaining the low cost of public transport and rent, free child care in the creches and kindergartens, education, university study and grants, pensions, and a great deal more besides.

Over 8,300 million marks were spent on health and social welfare in 1976, for example, in comparison with 5,900 million marks in 1970. The subsidies for national insurance and pensions rose in the same period from 15,000 million to 22,200 million marks. A family of four like the Schneiders now receive the equivalent of 610 marks a month in terms of social benefits. In 1970 it was 360 marks, and by 1980 it will be at least 680 marks.

Security for all our citizens

Our system of social protections embraces all periods in our citizens' lives and all areas of personality development. The following chapters contain a detailed description of the various benefits. This comprehensive system, which is continually being improved and not subject to periodical cutbacks and deterioration, did not fall from heaven. It was the result of hard work and determination on the part of the whole population who, in 1945, were faced with material and social devastation as a result of fascist domination and war.

Its development was only possible in a society which had turned its back on capitalism.

The security which the GDR can offer its citizens is above all an expression of the prevailing relations of power in the state and civil society. Our Constitution places all political power in the hands of the working people in both town and countryside, under the leadership of the working class and its Marxist-Leninist party. It has now been established that the decisive task of advanced socialist society is to continue raising the standard of living and quality of life of our people on the basis of a fast rate of development in socialist production, increased efficiency, scientific and technological progress and improved labour productivity. All state bodies are now obliged to follow this principle in their activities.

Social welfare policy in the GDR is elaborated on a long-term planned basis to correspond to developments in other areas of the economy. It draws its stability and material basis from this process. At the same time the success of social welfare policies acts as a powerful impetus to the initiative and creativity of the working people in their efforts to carry out economic plans. The Five Year Plan 1976-1980 provides, like its predecessor, for a high and consistent rate of growth, both for the development of production and the strengthening of its material and technological basis and for the systematic improvement in standards of living and cultural life.

A comprehensive social welfare programme

The comprehensive social welfare programme adopted at the SED's 8th Congress in 1971 and confirmed at the 9th Congress in 1976 was derived from the socialist principle that economic achievements should benefit the working people. Joint decisions on basic questions of social welfare policy, including the system of national insurance, have been taken in recent years by the Politburo of the SED's Central Committee, the National Executive of the Trade Union Confederation (FDGB), and the Council of Ministers of the GDR.

One major feature of this social welfare programme, the most comprehensive so far in the history of the GDR, is that it aims at improving the social conditions in which the working class, and society as a whole, live today. All classes and strata will have a share in this because the measures provided for in the programme are so many and varied: radical improvements in housing conditions; increases in the minimum wage and new higher rates of pay; the gradual introduction of a shorter working week; considerable increases in pensions; extension of national insurance and voluntary supplementary insurance coverage and of social welfare facilities; an enhanced quality of medical care; special support for working mothers and young married couples; increased availability of rest holidays for shiftworkers and working mothers; extension of paid holiday and in the capacity of holiday homes.

This is just a part of what is envisaged in the social welfare programme, and a great deal of it is already reality. Its effects are being felt in every factory and office, town and village, trade and profession, by the overwhelming majority of families and by every citizen of pensionable age. State subsidies are high: 50,000 million marks in the period from 1976 to 1980 (excluding the money spent on the housing programme).

A home for every family

Priority in the social welfare programme goes to those measures that are most important to the people. That is why housing construction is the focal point of the programme. The aim is for society to comply fully with its responsibility to provide housing for everybody by 1990. By then every family is to have a modern home suited to its size and composition. An age-old dream of the revolutionary working class will thus be realized.

The 760,000 flats built and modernized in the period 1971-1976 meant that 2,200,000 citizens have already moved into better homes. At least another 700,000 more flats will become available in the next four years. The state has allocated over 55,000 million marks for this purpose for the period 1976-1980. At the same time rents remain low and stable. They vary in our republic from on average 80 pfennigs to a mere 1.25 marks per square metre. Two thirds of the new flats will go to working-class families and another 11 per cent to families with a large number of children.

The housing construction programme also aims at building the necessary amenities in new residential areas without delay: kindergartens, for example, creches, schools, gyms and playing fields, cultural and health facilities, shops and services. Neighbouring older districts are integrated more fully into the new community.

The housing construction programme is of enormous social significance. It creates an important material basis for a socialist way of life: the living environment is considered here to be part of people's culture, providing better opportunities for spending leisure time purposefully, and enhancing social communication. Improved housing conditions also have a positive effect on married and family life. Apart from this, any socially or regionally defined differences in housing conditions which still prevail are being cancelled out by the progressive all-round application of modern standards.

National insurance under trade union control

The Confederation of Free German Trade Unions (FDGB), which unites 14 industrial and white-collar unions, is the class organization of the working class in the GDR. In 1977 it had 8,300,000 members, including over four million women. 96 per cent of working people belong to the FDGB. Article 44 of the GDR's Constitution lays down that the unions should defend the interests of their members by taking a broad part in decision-making in the state apparatus, the economy and civil society. The Constitution guarantees their independence and protects them from any attempts to restrict or hinder their activity.

The FDGB participates on an equal basis at all levels of state and society, developing many initiatives in the interests of economic and social policy. The Council of Ministers of the GDR is under an obligation to cooperate with the Confederation in these matters. The FDGB is represented in all elected state bodies at national and local level, with a total of 27,500 deputies. Its 68 representatives constitute the second largest faction in the People's Chamber, and they also have the right to propose legislation.

The FDGB is responsible for the GDR's unified national insurance scheme, which affects all factory and office workers and is an important part of the network of social measures for the protection of working people. The national insurance scheme gives material and financial coverage, complying with the constitutional right of all insurants and their families to material protection in the case of illness, industrial accident, pregnancy, disability, old age or the death of a breadwinner.

When the unified national insurance scheme for industrial and white-collar workers was established in 1945 in what is now the GDR, it was the answer to long-standing demands of the revolutionary German working-class movement. These included handing over responsibility for the scheme to the trade unions. The unified, democratic national insurance scheme dispensed with the capitalist custom of private concerns making a profit out of insurance. This made it possible to overcome the division between different groups of policy holders (factory workers, office workers). At the same time all insurants were given the chance to participate directly in the way the scheme was run, through their elected representatives, and to guarantee its social mission: ensuring a continued extension of social provisions for working people, their dependents and old-age pensioners as well as medical care for all, and taking steps to provide effective preventive medical care.

The GDR's national insurance scheme, which covers more than 86 per cent of the population, can boast an extraordinarily positive record: the money it spends on its members is constantly increasing. In 1966 it spent 709 marks per insurant, and in 1976, 1,283 marks. In the course of the current Five Year Plan, the total will reach 103,600 million marks, nearly a third more than in the period 1971-1975. The increased spending, which illustrates the improved quality of the schemes provisions, is covered completely by growing state subsidies. While members' contributions have stayed the same from the outset, state contributions have risen from 15,000 million marks in 1970 to 22,200 million marks in 1976. Working people pay a monthly contribution consisting of 10 per cent of their income to the scheme, which is compulsory, but only up to an assessment limit of 600 marks. In other words, 60 marks is the highest contribution. The enterprise employing the insurant pays 12.5 per cent. In return every employee receives all necessary medical treatment and medicine free of charge, including treatment and sick pay in the case of accident, and also various preventive measures for the protection of health.

Working people for whom membership of this scheme is not compulsory, such as members of socialist production collectives in the agricultural and fisheries sector, cooperative tradesmen and the self-employed, are covered under a scheme operated by the GDR State Insurance Office. They also pay a contribution equal to 10 per cent of their monthly earnings up to a limit of 60 marks. The cooperative pays the same amount. The self-employed pay 20 per cent of their income up to 120 marks a month.

What are the advantages of the voluntary supplementary insurance scheme?

For several years, working people have also had the opportunity of joining a voluntary supplementary insurance scheme which entitles them to higher insurance benefits if they are

In the GDR's largest leather goods factory in Schwerin, Irmgard Haltumer (SED) and Gottfried Torbicki (NDPD), deputies of the People's Chamber, are finding out whether recent social welfare measures stipulating a shorter working week for shift workers and mothers of two or more children have been put into practice (right).
Shift leader Hans-Joachim Lüth and lorry driver Dieter Künzel initiated a campaign in their pit in Lochau to provide more stone for the housing programme (below).

In May 1977, the 9th Congress of the FDGB in Berlin made important decisions on how to continue the social welfare programme. The delegates gave a warm welcome to Erich Honecker, General Secretary of the SED Central Committee and Chairman of the GDR State Council (foreground), and Harry Tisch, Chairman of the National Executive of the FDGB (above). Forewoman Hertha Kurth (right) has been representing the interests of her workmates for 18 years as a trade union shop steward at the coloured yarn factory in Leipzig-Markkleeberg (left).

Specialists from the USSR and the GDR worked together to build a central timber yard in Oppelhain in the district of Finsterwalde.

Medical students at Rostock University also include young people from Finland, Iraq, India and many other countries. Our picture shows some future doctors on the market place of this Hanseatic town.

prevented from working by illness, disability or old age. The contribution is 10 per cent of any income over 600 marks a month. The enterprise employing the insurant is then obliged to pay the same amount. Anybody who has taken part in this scheme for 25 years and paid the relevant contributions is relieved of all further payments, although the enterprise continues to pay its share until the insurant reaches pensionable age or is no longer able to work.

Herr and Frau Schneider also take part in the voluntary insurance scheme. They pay 35 and 45 marks a month respectively. In the case of sick leave of more than six weeks they receive 70 per cent of their average net income, rather than 50 per cent, until they are fit and healthy again. If a family has three or more children, the insurance sick benefit is 90 per cent of full pay. (For the first six weeks of illness employees automatically receive 90 per cent of their average net income.)

The opportunities for ensuring oneself a high retirement or disability pension, up to as much as 90 per cent of one's average net income, are extremely good if both the compulsory and voluntary schemes are properly taken advantage of. Taking the present incomes situation as a yardstick, Herr and Frau Schneider will receive a supplementary pension of 200 to 250 marks a month each as a result of their voluntary contributions. This will bring their total pension up to about 80 per cent of their average net monthly income. So they have managed to improve significantly on the material and financial benefits guaranteed them in illness and old age.

The voluntary supplementary insurance scheme was also able to increase its benefits several times in recent years, the last occasion being 1976. This included limiting the period of contribution to 25 years, as mentioned above, and abolishing the upper limit of 1,200 marks on assessable income, bringing about a corresponding potential increase in sick benefit and pensions. Membership of the scheme rose from about 750,000 in 1971 to 2,400,000 in 1976, out of a total of 3,500,000 eligible citizens.

II. Care and protection at work

The planned socialist economy guarantees full-time work to every citizen of our country. Since nobody has to worry about losing their job, since everyone is needed, along with their ideas and experience, to achieve good results in the field of production and thus serve society and themselves, working relationships in the factories and offices are increasingly characterized by friendliness, mutual help, understanding and a collective spirit. A humane climate at work affects the individual's whole life, his or her well-being and family happiness. The new Labour Code, which comes into force on 1 January 1978, reflects the basic significance work is considered to have for the individual and for society as a whole.

How everybody helped write the Labour Code

The new Labour Code reflects the socialist character of work. It obliges enterprises and establishments to create working conditions that make a high level of performance possible, enhance work satisfaction and contribute to the development of socialist personality. As a formulation of socialist labour legislation it embraces the rights and duties of each individual employee, the trade unions and the directors, laying down codes of behaviour for all parties involved in workplace activity, both management and employees, who also play a part in running their organizations; drawing up, altering and cancelling labour contracts; the organization of work and socialist work discipline; wages and bonuses; initial and supplementary training; working hours and paid holidays; health protection and industrial safety; cultural, intellectual and sporting activities, and facilities for eating, childcare, etc.; the special rights and protection of working women and mothers; insurance for industrial and white-collar workers; employees' legal responsibilities at work; arbitration in cases of conflict and care of the firm's pensioners.

The Labour Code's complex provisions are a further extension of the network of protective social measures and testify to the great respect shown the dignity of each individual in socialist society.

The Code's nature corresponds to the democratic manner in which it was prepared. The draft, which was drawn up on the initiative of the unions and presented in the People's Chamber by the FDGB, was subjected to broad public debate in which over 5,800,000 people took part. The 150,000 suggestions and questions eventually produced 90 alterations to the content and 144 improvements to the wording. Many other comments found expression in the clauses on how to implement the Code. As a result of all this, the Labour Code bears the mark not only of the working class, but of all working people in the GDR.

A guaranteed job

The right to a free choice of job is another factor in any system of social guarantees. An employee can have various reasons for wanting to change his or her job. Usually they are personal: moving to another town, for example, wanting more money, or a result of family problems or not being happy with one's present job. But they can also be caused by developments in the firm, such as a change in production or structure.

Usually a change of job can be arranged by means of a signed agreement to the termination of employment between

the employee and his firm. This is an expression of mutual acceptance of the decision. But both parties also have the right to cancel a labour contract unilaterally. The employee can change his or her job at any time after the statutory period of notice, normally 14 days, without having to give a reason. Any decision by the organization to terminate contract is strictly controlled by legal provisions in the interest of the employee, and continues to be the exception rather than the rule. The most important condition is that the relevant trade union committee should give its consent to the dismissal after hearing the employee put his or her case.

The new Labour Code introduces a further protection: the firm is bound by law to offer a suitable alternative job, either in the firm or somewhere else, **before** the intended termination of the employment contract — irrespective of whether the termination was requested by one of the two parties or by mutual agreement. A revised or transfer contract is then drawn up, stipulating all the important conditions of the future employment and binding the firm to any assistance that may become necessary as a result of retraining, further training or moving home. The new laws guarantee that nobody should have to spend a single day without a job or the corresponding income. For the firm to serve advance notice of actual dismissal, the employee must have turned down the revised or transfer contract offered.

Certain groups of people are covered by a further measure protecting them from dismissal. Pregnant and nursing mothers, mothers of children under one year old and mothers who wish to spend a year at home after the birth of a child, employees away on military service or absent due to illness, accident, quarantine or statutory holiday leave may not be dismissed. The same protection is enjoyed by former victims of Nazi persecution, people with trade union functions, the handicapped, tuberculosis sufferers, convalescents and rehabilitants, employees within five years of pensionable age, young people under 18 and skilled workers who completed their training less than one year beforehand.

Dismissal without notice is only allowed under GDR labour law if socialist work discipline or civil duties have been seriously violated, and even then only after all other efforts to induce a less antisocial attitude in the person concerned have failed.

Social wage policy

The security experienced by the Schneider family is also reflected in their income. Herr and Frau Schneider together bring home 1,550 marks a month. Their son brings in on average a further 800 marks.

Income is the main source of prosperity for all citizens of the GDR. Improvements in their standards of living and quality of life are mostly achieved by means of increased income. As we explained in the first chapter, wages in the GDR go up in accordance with advances made by the national economy and they are accompanied by growing subsidies from social funds.

Deductions from gross income are not very large. Out of Herr Schneider's monthly pay of 1,050 marks, 182.30 marks are stopped for income tax and 60 marks for national insurance. That comes to 23 per cent. As Gerhard Schneider is a member of the voluntary supplementary insurance scheme, he makes a further contribution of 45 marks for this.

How do the Schneiders spend their budget? More or less like the average working-class family of four in the GDR in 1976:

—food and drink	40.1 per cent
—rent	2.6 per cent
—electricity, gas, heating	1.6 per cent
—other domestic services and repairs	7.3 per cent
—material, clothes, leather goods	15.3 per cent
—other goods (furniture, electrical appliances, vehicles)	20.2 per cent
—taxes, savings accounts, other regular payments, books, theatre, cinema	12.9 per cent

To convert this into marks, the Schneider family spend about a hundred marks a month on, for example, the upkeep of their small Trabant car (including tax, repairs and petrol).

The Labour Code embodies a number of basic principles, and their implementation is strictly supervised by the trade unions.

- Wages policy is based on performance. Wages correspond to the quantity and quality work carried out. Pay scales, demarcation of types of work, and forms of payment, such as piece rates and incentives, are laid down with the participation of the unions. Employees are paid according to their agreed place on the wage or salary scale. Men and women, adults and young people receive equal pay for equal work.
- Firms are obliged to ensure that employees do not suffer any cut in pay as a result of technical or technological changes or structural alterations to production or the organization of the enterprise. Any necessary training which the firm has to undertake does not entail any cost for its employees.
- The socialist state guarantees a monthly minimum pre-tax wage, which in 1976 was 400 marks. Allowances for difficult working conditions, weekend and holiday work and night work are not included, and nor are bonuses for shift work and productivity payments.
- Working citizens have a right to receive bonuses over and above their normal pay. The Labour Code of the German Democratic Republic acknowledges many kinds of material reward, such as annual bonuses and bonuses for reaching a specific target of for high performance. These have a noticeable effect on basic pay and are closely bound up with the performance principle. This is especially true of the annual bonuses. Over the last few years, Herr and Frau Schneider have been receiving bonuses of 750 to 850 marks each at the end of the year.
- Other income factors are the allowances for difficult working conditions and indemnifications for work away from home, business trips, training courses of various kinds, and for having to run two homes or to move house as a result of one's job.

Health protection and industrial safety

All firms are bound by law to give priority to protecting the health of their employees and preserving their physical and intellectual capacities. One way in which they do this is by influencing the construction, design and maintenance of technically safe machines and installations which make work easier, and by ensuring healthy working conditions which are an assistance to production.

This principle has been put into practice in the department of the tyre factory where Gerhard Schneider works. The introduction of modern technology and a scientific organization of production have succeeded in abolishing all hard physical work in the hall. This is in keeping with the general trend in the GDR. The proportion of jobs entailing heavy physical work sank from 4.5 per cent in 1972 to 0.7 per cent in 1976. The proportion of people working in unpleasant climatic conditions sank in the same period from 4.1 per cent to 0.7 per cent.

Management, unions and employees work closely together in socialist enterprises to guarantee health protection and industrial safety. Voluntary safety officers and paid inspectors, often several working as a team, support the managements in their efforts to fulfil their obligations in this respect and receive their orders directly from them. Safety officers, experienced workers and engineers, carry out their duties on a voluntary basis. Firms with over 500 employees have to engage a paid safety inspector who is not allowed to be given any other work over and above his duties in this field. In firms with over 1,000 employees inspectors are grouped together as an inspectorate.

The unions' elected representatives have the right to enter workshops, offices, production halls and any other premises

at any time, to examine relevant documents and to demand information. They trace shortcomings and investigate the causes of accidents and occupational diseases. They are empowered to give the works director orders and to demand an immediate halt to production if this should become necessary due to danger to life or health.

Health protection and industrial safety are also the concern of local authorities, the Workers' and Farmers' Inspectorate and the Public Prosecutor's Office of the GDR. Safe equipment, methods and surroundings at work demand careful scrutiny. Their introduction and use must always be approved and supervised by the state. Firms are obliged to provide all necessary protective equipment (footwear, gloves, protective headgear and masks, goggles, safety belts, overalls) free of charge. These must match up to prescribed standard and be suitable for use at all times. Firms must also make sure that their employees possess the necessary knowledge, skills and faculties to carry out the job they are given.

State spending on health protection and industrial safety in the period 1971 to 1976 was about 21,000 million marks. In industry and building construction alone, 198,000 workers a year had their work revised or completely changed, so that working conditions were considerably improved and the accident rate fell from 40.4 per 1,000 workers in 1971 to 32.6 in 1976.

Health centres in the factories

The health service in factories and offices is one of our country's most important achievements. All enterprises and combines are bound by law to provide and maintain health facilities. In line with the directives issued by the Ministry of Health, enterprises with 500 to 2,000 employees have a duty doctor, those with 2,000 to 4,000 employees have an outpatient department, and those with 4,000 or over have a health centre. These are subordinate to the state health service. The works director must support the head of the health facility and cooperate closely with him.

There are state stipulations covering the composition of these facilities. A health centre must have a general, endogenic, paediatric, gynaecological and stomatological department, and also a laboratory, X-ray department and physiotherapy department. This makes it possible to offer employees all-round medical care, reducing the time and energy wasted by patients to a minimum. Prescribed therapy such as baths and massages can be carried out on the spot. Patients from neighbouring residential areas are also free to take advantage of the works' health centre and outpatient departments.

At present, works health facilities in the GDR total over 3,600, including 109 health centres, 290 outpatient departments and 2,051 duty doctors. Over 4 million people a year have check-ups here, and particular attention is paid to disorders that could arise out of their work. Cancer and diabetes detection is also undertaken. About 800,000 people who still have to work in noisy, dusty or hot conditions, or who are subjected to a high level of vibration or of chemicals in the atmosphere, are regularly examined by industrial doctors so that serious effects can be traced early and treated. There is also regular medical supervision for young working people under 18 or still involved in training courses, for people doing heavy physical work or handling noxious materials. Another 300,000 employees of small and middle-sized firms which do not have their own health facilities are also looked after in these industrial medical centres. A further 250,000 from all the various industrial sectors are already treated under examination schemes suited to their particular work situation.

A well organized scheme of cure holidays is part of industrial health care. In 1976, about 346,000 industrial and white-collar workers were able to enjoy free prophylactic, curative or convalescent holidays. Patients receive 90 per cent of their net pay for as long as they are on the cures. The GDR has 175 sanatoriums, spa hotels and children's health

homes with a capacity of about 24,500 beds, and agreements on curative holidays have also been signed with other socialist countries.

Catering facilities

It is the duty of all organizations to provide all-round amenities for their employees, and the Labour Code contains detailed, compulsory stipulations as to what these should include. These stipulations are designed to promote constant improvements in employees' working and living conditions, and it is the responsibility of the state-appointed works directors, together with the FDGB and other social organizations, to see that they are carried out. Special consideration is given to shift workers, employees with several children, older workers and employees whose ability to work has for some reason been reduced.

Firms are therefore obliged to provide a sufficient number of canteens, cloakrooms, washrooms, ladies' rest rooms, food shops, etc. They also take steps to ensure that travel to and from work runs smoothly and comfortably and to expand recreational and weekend facilities. Mothers can rest assured that their offspring are being well looked after during working hours in the works creche or kindergarten. Holiday camps in different regions offer their school-age children the chance to relax in the fresh air.

These services are financed out of the works cultural and social funds. These also provide the money for cultural and intellectual life, for sport and leisure activities in the firm, for visits to concerts and the theatre, for amateur groups and hobby clubs, amateur art collectives and choirs.

And what is the catering situation like for employees? Each firm is bound by law to provide its workers with a hot, nutritious main meal and a variety of snacks and salads during the breaks, as well as drinks, fruit and cakes. 3,300,000 working people in our republic daily receive low-priced canteen meals which are increasingly being prepared

with dietetic standards in mind. Special provisions are made for shift workers. They are given food which is suited to their particular abnormal conditions. The same goes for blast-furnacemen and chemical and print workers, who also receive special drinks or milk free of charge. Marianne and Gerhard Schneider also eat their midday meal at work. There are four choices every day, ranging in price from 0.70 to 1.50 marks.

In trade union hands

Improving working and living conditions in the firm is a specific area for the trade unions in the factories and offices. They have an unrestricted right to codetermination and, in order to implement this right in practice, have been provided in the new Labour Code with comprehensive rights concerning information, supervisory control, the drawing up of agreements and the presentation of their own proposals and the right to have their approval sought for all decisions. Works directors are bound by law to report to works assemblies and shop-stewards' meetings on the state of plan fulfilment and on the realization of agreements with the trade unions that have been written into the firm's collective contract. These cover, amongst other things, improvement of industrial safety, extended health care, and creating more holiday opportunities and children's camps. One very important part of the collective contracts are the schemes for women and young people. These include measures for developing their creative talents in the production process, assisting them in their political and vocational training, and systematically preparing them for positions of leadership.

The success of union work in the factories and offices owes much to the level of activity among the members themselves. Over 500,000 trade unionists work on the factory or departmental union committees, and over 277,000 are shop stewards. There are over 260,000 cultural organizers and national insurance officers respectively, and 241,000

industrial safety controllers. Over 92,000 trade unionists are also worker controllers.

The unions have a voice in drawing up the works plan — which can only be submitted with the signature of the firm's union committee—and in any intensification of production. They organize the emulation drives and ensure that measures taken to raise labour productivity are reconciled with the task of improving employees' working conditions. Work quotas may only be applied or changed by the works managers with the prior consent of the trade unions. The unions play a considerable part in determining how terms of payment are formulated and how money from the various funds, e.g. the wages fund, bonus fund, cultural and social funds, and incentive fund, is to be spent. They are entitled to nominate workers for distinctions, help plan work and holiday rotas, inspect the services which the firm is obliged to provide and the construction and renovation of social and cultural facilities. The unions decide on matters relating to preparing, signing, revising and terminating work contracts, to references and other personnel problems and to the allocation of available accommodation. They promote socialist work discipline and the observation of regulations and safety measures, and organize popular vigilance to ensure that laws are not broken.

The FDGB's holiday service makes an important contribution to carrying out citizens' rights to rest and relaxation. All working people are legally entitled to a paid annual holiday, which at present is mainly 21 to 24 days. The holiday service offers cheap places in FDGB holiday homes in the prettiest areas of the republic. In 1977, 1,600,000 workers went to on one of these holiday homes. Another 1,500,000 places are provided in homes belonging to the firms themselves. New trade union holiday centres are opening every year, so that the number of places is rising constantly. Apart from that, the FDGB has rooms at its disposal in six of the GDR's most beautiful hotels. This means another 90,000 places, and as a result of a special agreement with the hotels they are no more expensive than in the trade union homes.

This summer the Schneiders spent their holiday in a comfortable modern FDGB centre in Oberwiesental. For each adult place (13 days full board) they paid 100 marks, and for their daughter Sabine 30 marks. They were eligible for a $33^1/_3$ per cent discount on their rail fares. A union member pays on average 43 per cent of the costs for a 222 mark holiday The rest is paid for by the state (34 marks) and the union (93 marks).

Care during illness

In spring, Gerhard Schneider was unable to work for several weeks after a brief lack of concentration cost him a contusion in his upper thigh. Two years previously his wife had not been able to work for several months as a result of a lung complaint. For three months she was given residential treatment in a modern, highly specialized hospital in Berlin-Buch, one of the best in the GDR. In both cases their jobs were kept open for them and their families were provided for. They received all the necessary treatment and medicines free and were compensated financially out of national insurance funds. Frau Schneider's collective from work visited her in hospital and at home and made sure that contact was kept up over her long period of absence.

What kind of concrete protection do workers get in the case of illness or accident? Workers and their dependents are covered by national insurance for all necessary financial and material assistance. Material benefits include:

- Medical and dental treatment. This is carried out either in state health centres or by individual doctors and dentists with their own practice and paid for out of national insurance funds. All citizens have the right to choose a doctor they feel they can trust.
- Residential treatment in hospitals and sanatoriums. This is also financed from national insurance funds and covers treatment in state institutions and centres run by religious groups which have an agreement with the national insurance office. There is no time limit.

● Treatment in the home. This is accepted as an alternative to hospital treatment and arranged by the state health service where domestic circumstances, the patient's condition or other causes make it necessary to give treatment in the home.

● Curative, convalescent and prophylactic cures. Patients are selected on a medical basis by the doctors concerned. Permission for the cure is then in the hands of the relevant commissions of the trade union factory committees.

● Medicines, medical aids, artificial limbs and dentures. These are also paid for out of national insurance funds. There are no financial limits to what medicines doctors may prescribe if they consider it necessary. As there are no prescription charges, the patient does not have to pay a single penny.

● Fares and transport costs. The costs of necessary journeys to the nearest doctor or place of treatment are covered by the national insurance scheme. The ambulance service is organized by the German Red Cross.

How much sick pay do you get?

The main financial benefit offered by the national insurance scheme is the sick pay which an insurant receives if he or she is temporarily unable to work as a result of illness, accident, occupational disease or quarantine.

Employees given leave because of illness continue to be paid 90 per cent of their average net daily income for the first six weeks of absence in any one calendar year. From the seventh week onwards, sick pay is calculated according to monthly gross average income and the number of children the patient has. In the case of a low income and a large number of children, it continues at up to 90 per cent. Herr Schneider received 70 per cent of his gross income during this period in consideration of his school-age child (his adult, independently insured son does not count for such purposes), and of his membership of the voluntary supplementary insurance scheme. Employees who do not belong to this scheme, who have no children to support and whose income is over 600 marks a month receive 50 per cent of their normal pay. Apprentices and students always receive their complete allowance or grant.

Sick pay is also paid in the case of residential treatment. It is continued until the patient is either able to work again or becomes registered as an invalid or eligible for an accident pension, but with an outside limit of 78 weeks. If a doctor establishes that the patient is unlikely to be fit for work again in this period, an application is made for a medical certification of invalidity. In the case of industrial accident or occupational disease, patients receive sick pay to the full value of their net income until they are either ready to work again, registered as temporary invalids or awarded an accident pension.

Inability to work must be certified by a doctor before sick pay can be granted. All practising doctors in both state health centres and individual surgeries are empowered to issue certificates, so that patients are also free to choose a doctor in whom they have confidence. They do not have to receive treatment from doctors in their firm, although this opportunity is usually taken advantage of. This is also useful if the doctor orders light work due to a temporary reduction in the patient's ability to work, or as a protective measure. In this case the firm is obliged to restrict the employee's work accordingly, to revise his or her responsibilities or working-hours, or to find alternative work. Prescribed light work is limited to 12 weeks, 24 in exceptional cases, and employees continue to receive at least their average normal income.

The Labour Code also makes provisions for paid leave of absence for medical treatment where necessary.

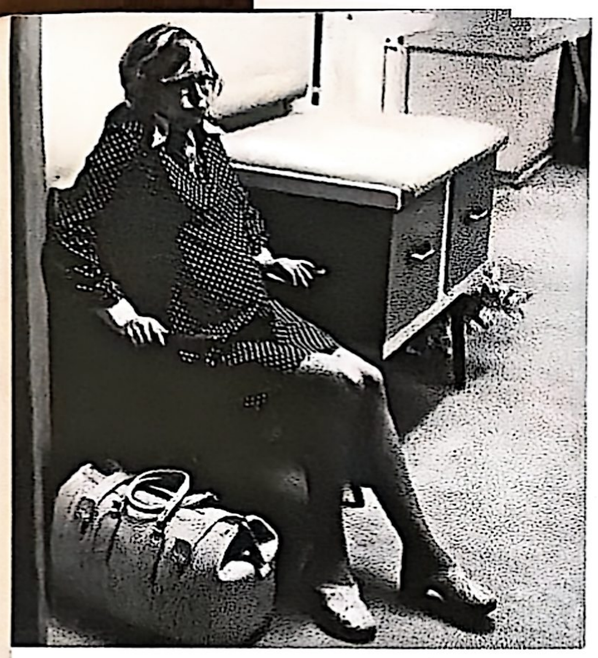
Insurance coverage for social activities

Socialist democracy in the GDR means that it is quite normal for citizens to take part in various forms of political and social life or to have cultural or sporting commitments. The

state and society encourage such activities, constantly opening up new horizons. Gerhard Schneider is a member of the Socialist Unity Party of Germany and for the last few years he has also been an elected trade union shop steward in his factory. Marianne Schneider was elected by her workmates as a lay magistrate and carries out her judicial tasks in the local court at Königs Wusterhausen.

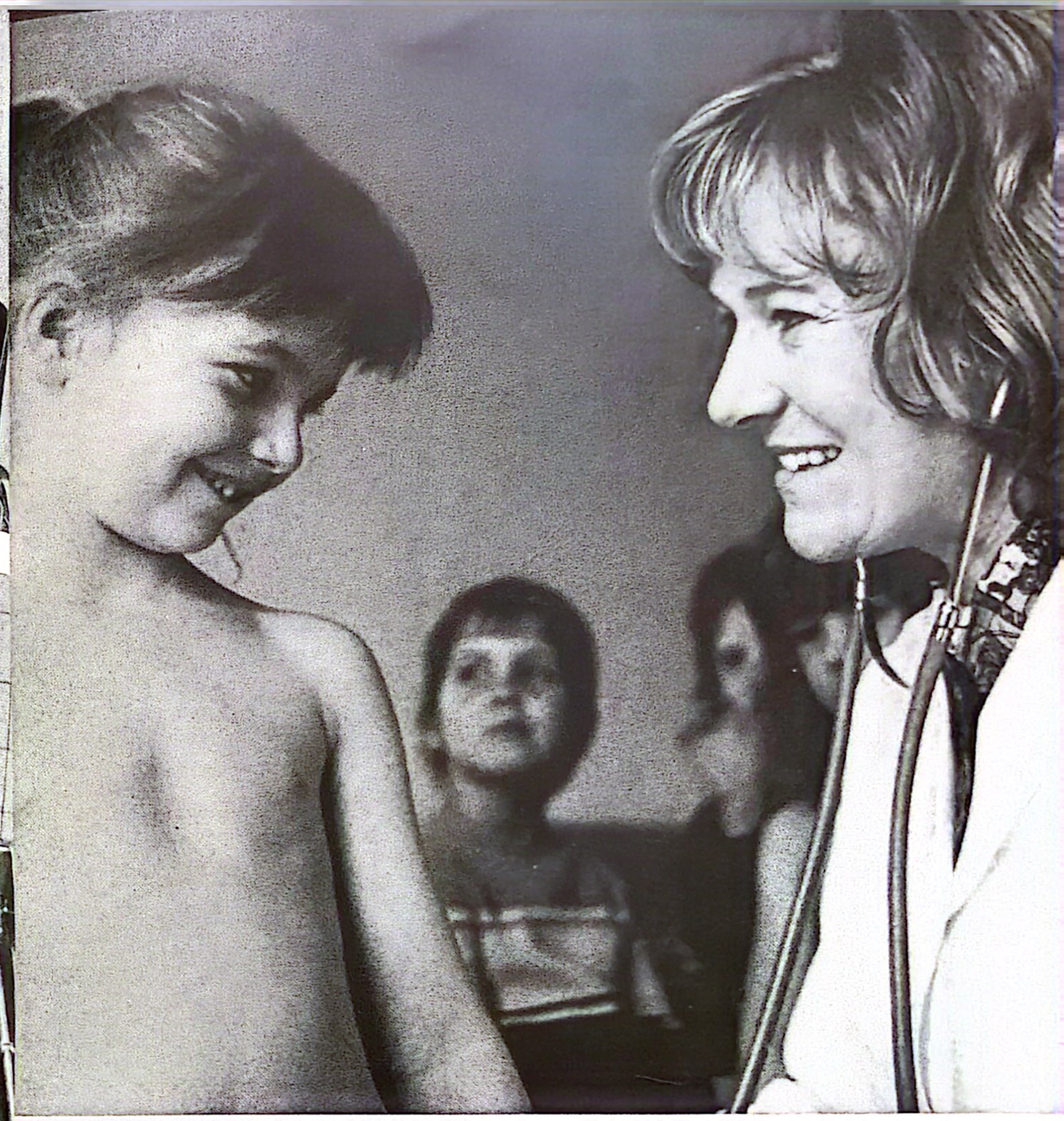
The socialist state protects its citizens' rights to responsible social activitiy, guaranteeing them paid free time from work and granting them special concessions within the system of social insurance. Citizens who meet with an accident while carrying out their social functions are eligible for extended insurance coverage. They are awarded benefits as in the case of industrial accident, receiving sick pay to the full value of their average income until they have recovered, and if necessary they are also entitled to the corresponding pension.

After completing her studies, Andrea Nestler became a junior teacher at the 48th School in Berlin-Lichtenberg. The teaches German, mathematics and sport to 22 boys and girls.
This modern training centre at the power station in Boxberg equips apprentices for their trade, and when they have finished they are also eligible for university admission. Here we see future fitters, machinists and mechanics carrying out a basic experiment during an electronics class (below).



The state and society look after mothers and children: having your baby in a clinic and comprehensive assistance in pregnancy are now taken for granted in the GDR. Paid maternity leave lasts six months (left).
A hot meal every day for more than 1,100 children from neighbouring schools is provided in the Berlin multipurpose restaurant Ahornblatt (centre).

Heidemarie Zinn (right), a young forewoman at the Greifswald telecommunications factory, does her job very capably. Here we see her discussing with experienced skilled worker Brigitte Dietrich how to fulfil the plan despite reorganization of the production lines (left).
Large families enjoy particular state assistance, from finding a home to going on holiday. The Walters from Berlin know they and their five children are in good hands (right).



The Polyclinic in south Schwerin is another new health centre. Here is the senior doctor, Dr. Sabine Seyfert carrying out an examination with the ergometric bicycle.

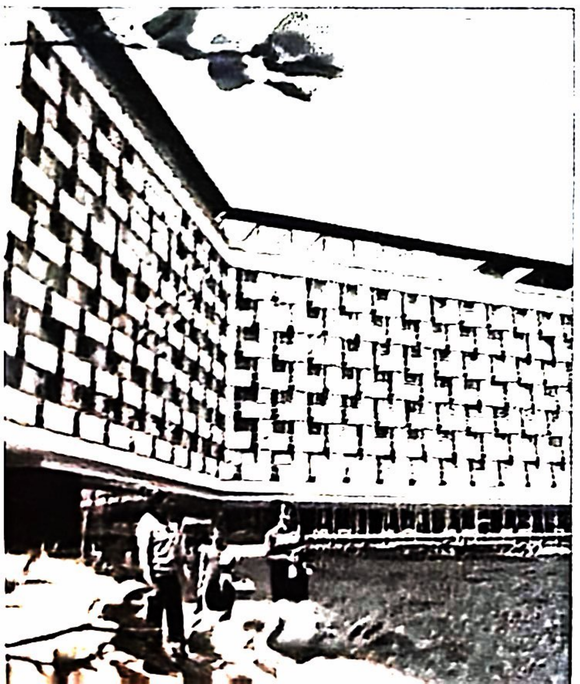
In the Dresden rehabilitation centre the handicapped can learn a skill which brings them new hope and interest (above left).

About 25,000 working people a year are offered a cure holiday in Bad Elster for which they pay nothing.
The hospital in Vogelsang-Gommern near Magdeburg is one of seven specializing in rheumatic complaints in the GDR (below left).

Sabine is six. Before she starts school she must be thoroughly examined again. Two pre-school examinations are compulsory for all children (above).

The GDR aims to solve the housing problem by 1990. Over 33,000 people will be living in this new residential area in north Magdeburg by 1980 (above).
Building up a network of services in the countryside brings relief above all to women farmers. The rural population of the association of villages around Berlstedt can do their shopping conveniently in its new supermarket (left).

Senior citizens can feel at ease in fine new homes for the elderly. Board and lodging to suit their particular requirements, medical care and cultural and intellectual activities make later life more pleasant.



The FDGB's holiday service creates opportunities for relaxing holidays at bargain prices. Working people can spend their paid holiday in the most beautiful areas of the country. Trips to the Baltic coast are particularly popular. A swimming pool, lawns for sunbathing, cultural and sports facilities, restaurants, bars and dance halls offer holidaymakers in the new recreation complex on Lake Müritz an enormous choice for relaxing (left).

III. Special protection for mothers and children

Marianne Schneider has given birth to two children. Her son Jürgen was born in 1955 and her daughter Sabine in 1967. She received convincing help and support from her state and society during pregnancy and in looking after her children, particularly when they were very young. This included clinical assistance during pregnancy, pregnancy and maternity leave, maternity advice, care and education of her children in the creche and kindergarten and a great deal else besides.

Easing the burdens on working women

The experience of the Schneider family testifies to the serious attention paid by our socialist state to assisting marriage and motherhood and strengthening socialist family life. Working women and mothers are given particular help. Making their lives easier is a priority. One of the main reasons for this is that 86 per cent of working-age women in the GDR have a job or are currently involved in job training. Every third production worker is a woman. Women are a majority in the retail trade, the post office and telephone service and school education. It is no secret that their daily lives are still burdened with problems that prevent them to some extent from developing their skills and which can disrupt the harmony of family life. Working mothers with several children under 16 are particularly affected—and they constitute 40 per cent of working women.

The socialist state makes considerable sums of money available for perfecting material conditions so that all women, including those who have several children, can make practical use of their rights in everyday life. They should be able to live up to their responsibilities as workers and mothers without extra burdens. For this reason measures for further improving the living and working conditions of working mothers and their families make up a considerable part of the social welfare programme. They include a shorter working day, paid absence for looking after young children and helping bring them up, a day off each month — with pay — for housework, health care for mothers and children, generous support for women on training courses and arrangements by the socialist state for day care and education.

Efforts on the part of the state and society have resulted in a constant drop in infant mortality, which has now reached a low level acknowledged throughout the world: 1.4 per 100 live births. It is indicative of the state's attitude that measures for assisting mothers and children have been considerably improved over the last few years. When their son Jürgen was born in 1955, the Schneiders received a birth allowance of 500 marks. Today the child allowance is 1,000 marks. When Sabine was born in 1967, pregnancy and maternity leave amounted to 14 weeks, whereas now it has been increased to 26 weeks.

The advantages of family planning

It was already established in a law passed in 1950 on the protection of mothers and children and the rights of women that illegitimate birth is no social stigma and that both mother and child should enjoy full social acknowledgement and legal protection. This is now taken for granted in everyday life and in the attitudes of our people. Single mothers and their children receive particular support from the state and society.

The introduction of birth control in the GDR is another important development in the programme for social welfare. In 1972 the People's Chamber passed a law on abortion enabling women to make their own decisions about how many children they want and when to have them. This is a contribution towards equal rights for women in training and at work, and in their married and family lives, and towards a positive and responsible attitude to having children. Abortions are carried out by doctors in state hospitals free of charge. This measure, which should be seen in the context of the free availability of contraceptives, has not had any negative effects on the GDR's birth rate: in 1973 there were 10.6 live births per 1,000 population, and by 1976 this had risen to 11.6. This trend continued into 1977. One happy outcome of this law is that illegal abortion has been almost completely wiped out and no abortion has resulted in death since that time.

Care for pregnant mothers

Expectant mothers and their children in the GDR today are legally entitled to a wide variety of assistance.

● **Pregnancy care.** Medical treatment and other social measures are particularly useful during pregnancy in order to avoid or limit complications. Regular free visits to the pregnancy centre have long been taken for granted. In 1976 there were 940 of these centres. The job of the people who work there is to make sure that all legal provisions for the protection of pregnant women are being observed and to give information about any legal questions that arise. Specialists prepare women for childbirth and motherhood with mental hygiene therapy, physical exercises, and practical advice on breastfeeding, weaning and general baby care. Over 99 per cent of babies are born in clinics. As a matter of principle no charges are made.

Pregnant women in a poor state of health or under stress

arising from overburdening at work or in the home can be admitted on doctor's orders to a pregnancy rest home for several weeks without loss of pay. Identity cards for pregnant women and recent mothers enable them to receive preferential treatment in doctors' surgeries, in administrative offices and on public transport.

● **Pregnancy and maternity leave.** This is granted for six weeks before and 20 weeks after childbirth, half a year altogether. Another two weeks are added after a multiple or difficult birth. During this period women continue to be paid their average net income in the form of pregnancy or maternity benefit from the national insurance scheme.

● **Financial support.** Since 1977 state birth allowances have been worth 1,000 marks per child. These are paid by instalment during visits to the pregnancy centre, on the birth of the child and then during visits to the maternity centre.

State child allowances are paid at the place of work along with wages. They are worth 20 marks a month for the first and second child, 50 marks for the third, 60 marks for the fourth and 70 marks for the fifth and any subsequent child. A family with five children will get 220 marks a month. The allowance is continued until the child has finished ten years' compulsory basic education, or completed pre-university schooling or a course at a specialist school or a school for physically or mentally handicapped children, and also in a number of other cases.

Employment rights for working mothers

Pregnant and nursing mothers and women with children under one year old have special employment rights. The GDR's Labour Code stipulates that they may not be given work which could damage their or their children's health. Their firms must find them suitable alternative work for a period laid down by the employee's doctor, and must continue to pay them at least the same wages as before. Pregnant and nursing mothers are not allowed to do night or shift work. Women with children of pre-school age can also refuse to do this kind of work. A woman who wants to visit the pregnancy or maternity centre receives paid time off work. Nursing mothers are allowed two paid three-quarters-of-an-hour breaks a day to feed their children.

Pregnant and nursing mothers, mothers with children under one year and single parents with children under three cannot be dismissed. If women are temporarily prevented from working full-time as a result of special family duties, they should be offered a part-time job in so far as this is possible in the firm. The working week, which is usually $43^3/_4$ hours, has been reduced to 40 hours without loss of pay for all full-time working mothers with two dependents under 16. Women with three or more children who work shifts are entitled to a minimum of 24 days paid annual holiday.

Full-time working women with a household of their own are granted one day a month off work if they are married or with children under 18, if one of their dependents has been certified by a doctor as in need of care, or if they are over 40 years old. Single men with children are also eligible for this day off if their children need looking after, as are men whose wives have been certified as in need of care. This "housework day" is paid according to the usual wage scale.

Employees must be given leave from work if a doctor certifies their children as sick and in need of care. Leave must also be given if an employee's children have been quarantined temporarily by the creche or kindergarten. Single parents are compensated with the usual sick pay.

A mother who has given birth to a second or any further child and chooses to look after her new-born child at home has the right to paid leave from work until the child's first birthday. After the maternity leave period has ended, the national insurance scheme subsidizes her at the normal rate of sick pay, with a minimum monthly contribution of 300 marks for two children and 350 marks for three.

A mother with a child under three who has to stop working because no creche place has been found for her child receives an allowance of 200 marks a month if a second child is born during this period.

There is also assistance for mothers and expectant mothers studying at university or vocational college or doing an apprenticeship. This includes paid leave, when a child falls ill, in the form of continued payment of grants and apprenticeship allowances and other financial benefits, and a variety of other supportive measures making it possible to complete the course within the normal time limit.

Child care in kindergartens and creches

The majority of children in the GDR are cared for and educated in creches and kindergartens. This is a real help for working mothers. In mid 1977 58 children out of a hundred under three years old were attending creches and nearly 88 out of a hundred between three and six (school age) were catered for in kindergartens. This state of affairs is well worthy of its international reputation. Nevertheless, further efforts are being made so that the demand for places can be completely satisfied in the next few years. The state allocates a lot of money for this purpose: 8,000 marks for a new creche place and about 4,000 marks for a new place in a kindergarten. Added to this is the cost of upkeep—partly covered by the organizations that the parents work for—which amounts to 2,000 marks and 860 marks a year respectively for each child. Parents do not have to pay anything for their children to be looked after in these state facilities. They just contribute a small amount towards the cost of food: 1.40 marks a day in the creche and 0.35 marks in the kindergarten. For large families, single parents with three or more children and other families in need of support the contribution can be reduced or waived.

The kindergartens and creches are part of the unified socialist education system and are known as "facilities for the education of pre-school-age children". They aim to provide an interesting life for the children and encourage their all-round development. In this they work closely with parents. All creches and kindergartens come under state supervision and there are legal norms relating to hygiene, construction, equipment and staffing which must be observed. The health and social welfare departments of the local councils are responsible for the creches, and the education departments of the local councils are responsible for the creches, and the education department for the kindergartens.

Regular medical and dental attention is a particular concern. Every creche and kindergarten belongs to a health centre which is responsible for giving the children regular check-ups, taking preventive health measures, providing medical treatment in the case of serious illness or accident and advising the staff on matters of medical care and hygiene. If there are insufficient places in any one area, priority is given to the children of working, studying or single mothers, shift workers' children and children from large families. Allocation is determined by local authority commissions whose members include honorary delegates from the lay population.

Schoolchildren in good hands

Sabine, Marianne and Gerhard Schneider's ten-year-old daughter, is in the fourth class of the polytechnical school in Eichwalde. She will do ten years of basic education, as laid down for all children in the Constitution of the GDR. Her parents know that with the collective of teachers and other people responsible for her general education she is in good hands.

The right to education is an important part of family welfare in the GDR. In order to provide the social basis for implementing this right completely, the socialist state has built up a comprehensive, unified education system which embraces all levels from the creche and kindergarten

through the ten-year polytechnical school and the extended secondary school for 16 to 18-year-olds up to vocational training, study in the universities and colleges and adult further education. A wide variety of education opportunities are thus open to our citizens at all stages in their lives, according to their particular interests and talents. The fact that all education is free in the GDR plays an important part in guaranteeing this right.

Morning classes and afternoon social activities together make up school education. Schoolchildren in the first four years are looked after on school premises free of charge after lessons end, participating in hobby and project groups or sports activities. In 1977, 74.1 six to ten-year-olds took advantage of this opportunity.

The children are provided daily with a square meal adapted to their age-group and prepared in accordance with stipulated nutritional standards. The total value of one meal is 1 to 1.20 marks including preparation, transport and service. As parents only have to pay 0.55 marks of this, the rest is subsidized by the state (to the tune of nearly 590 million marks in 1976). The children are also entitled to $^1/_4$ litre milk a day during the long break. School meals are free for children from large families. In 1977, 73 per cent of schoolchildren took school meals.

During the school holidays, children are looked after within a framework of holiday schemes. These include daily programmes of games and excursions and school camps. Children also have the chance to go on camps run by their parents' firms or by their own Pioneer organization. Together, the state, enterprises and trade unions allocate over 300 million marks a year to the holiday schemes. In 1976, 670,000 children took holidays in the 3,700 camps owned by factories and offices in the GDR. The parents pay a mere 12 marks for 16/18-day stay. The actual cost is about 250 marks in average.

Schoolbooks are sold to parents at low state-guaranteed prices. Orders are taken through the school. After consultation with the parents' association, form teachers can

also suggest to the headmaster or headmistress that certain children should be given their books free. Schoolchildren from the ninth year upwards who are in receipt of a maintenance allowance do not need to pay for their books. All text books in schools for the blind and deaf are free.

Every child of school and pre-school age has the right to free accident insurance. Coverage is for accidents on school or nursery premises, including during organized extra-curricular activity, during events within the holiday schemes and on the way to and from school or other associated venues. Protection is also given for damage to personal property. Any damage caused by the child to other property in the above-mentioned places is covered by the State Insurance Office.

Medical examination of all children of school and pre-school age is the responsibility of the national health service. It applies to all children from their third to their eighteenth birthdays. All pre-school-age children have two physical examinations before they are admitted into a school. There are then group check-ups for each year, and in the fourth and eighth years all children are given a particularly thorough medical examination. Special legal provisions also ensure that the children receive dental, orthopaedic and psychiatric attention. All physical handicaps, mental disturbances and damage to hearing and eyesight in children and young people must by law be reported so that necessary corrective measures can be undertaken as quickly as possible. The state has also laid down a compulsory vaccination and inoculation calendar so that all children receive the full programme of medical protections.

What is done to help large families?

At present there are 182,000 families in the GDR with four or more children. The Constitution insists that large families should be the object of special welfare measures and support. Local state bodies, firms and social organizations are responsible for these. Local authorities are bound by law to

investigate the working and living conditions of these families so that they have some insight into their problems, and on this basis they should offer financial and other support, without waiting until they receive an application from the family itself.

Large families and one-parent families with three or more children must be provided with flats — preferably modern ones — which are suited to their size and make-up and match up to their requirements. This includes taking housing needs into account in planning local housing development and allocating first the larger renovated flats and suitable houses. Large families have priority in applications for state permission and interest-free loans for building or purchasing family houses.

Where rent (including heating, hot water and other amenities) is more than three per cent of the tenants' gross income it is subsidized by the state, which often pays over half the rent bill. In individual cases, where the social situation demands, allowances can also be paid for children's clothing, bed linen, furniture, fuel, moving house, fitting children out for school or camp of the "coming-of-age" ceremony in the eighth class, when teenagers are formally admitted into the ranks of responsible adulthood. Large families do not have to pay for services such as laundry, dry cleaning or shoe repairs, or else they are eligible for discounts. Benefits such as these are paid if the parents' joint monthly income is no more than 1,500 marks (1,000 marks in the case of single parents with three children). For each subsequent child the upper limit is raised by 100 marks.

The parents of large families receive a regular programme of medical check-ups and care. They can consult doctors in the outpatient clinics frequently and quickly and are given priority in the allocation of prophylactic and curative rest holidays. The distribution of holiday places, often financed by the firm in the case of large families, has also been considerably improved over the last few years. Families with three or more children are eligible for a 33 $^1/_3$ per cent reduction in train fares.

IV. Assistance to other groups of citizens

Once, the efforts of young married couples trying to find or furnish a home for themselves were seen as their own personal problem and at most only relatives would take a helpful interest. Under socialist conditions in the GDR, these young people are now actively assisted by the state!

Handicapped, even seriously handicapped citizens are not forced into "fated" social isolation but looked after an constructively involved in social life.

Security and a guaranteed material existence await our senior citizens.

Support for young married couples

Jürgen Schneider is engaged and intends to get married next year. His fiancée, who is 19, is studying at the Karl Liebknecht Teachers' Training College in Potsdam and will qualify as a Bachelor of Education in 1981. She is being paid a monthly grant of 220 marks for this period, and if she does well she can earn herself an extra 40 to 80 marks. But the next thing on the agenda is the wedding. The decision to go ahead was made easier by the considerable help they will receive from the state to see them on their way.

Young married couples who are under 26, marrying for the first time and jointly earning less than 1,400 marks a month at the time of the wedding are eligible for loans under very favourable conditions. 5,000 marks are granted for buying furniture, household accessories, a radio and television, and

another 5,000 for acquiring or extending a new home. The loans are interest-free. They are paid back in monthly instalments over the next eight years. If a child is born in this period, however, they are allowed to keep 1,000 marks of the loan. After a second child they can keep another 1,500 marks, and after a third the remaining 2,500 marks.

Almost all young newly-weds take advantage of this generous offer. 400,000 loans to the value of 2,200 million marks were claimed between mid-1972 and mid-1977. The repayments on 323 million marks by 240,000 couples have already been waived.

Social welfare for the handicapped

The humanism of socialist society is clearly expressed in the effective assistance offered handicapped and seriously handicapped citizens. The state has introduced specific measures directed at enabling them and their families to participate more fully in social life.

Priority for the physically and mentally handicapped is their **vocational rehabilition,** which is carried out in accordance with their subjective potential and desires. A special organization, the "Protected Work Collective", is responsible for assisting seriously disabled citizens at work. Its members represent various different scientific fields, some of whom work in industry.

The concept of protected work, which is used internationally, has special features under socialist conditions, since it embraces the basic right to work for citizens whose skills have been reduced in some way. There is no reason why these people should be excluded from finding personal satisfaction in creative activity and from being able to develop their talents. Protected work is carried out under permanent medical supervision and within a framework of all-round social care, and is supported by society in many ways. The working environment is especially structured to suit the needs of the worker. Aids such as invalid chairs are provided and working hours laid down in advance. There are

special agreements relating to the kind of work that can be done.

A great deal has already been achieved in this field. In the last few years particularly, rehabilitation workshops and departments in the factories and offices have been developed. In 1976 there were 54 workshops providing 2,730 jobs and 203 special departments providing 3,615 places. There are a further 10,000 individual protected jobs. It was also necessary to create special training opportunities. People with little or no sight can choose from 12 qualified careers, including industrial production work. The deaf or partially deaf are trained in 20 different jobs.

Of course, the personal significance of this work is much more important than its economic worth (although it realized work to the value of nearly four million marks in 1976). For many handicapped people it is a source of new hope. The 9th Congress of the SED in 1976 again directed its attention to providing social support for handicapped citizens. A large number of measures are laid down in the social welfare programme. One of them is the increased subsidy for building new special schools within the framework of the next Five-Year Plan. There will be schools for the physically handicapped in Berlin, Erfurt, Leipzig and many rural areas. Not all problems have been solved yet. Above all, more protected jobs need to be created for the mentally handicapped. Local state authorities have the right to issue instructions to factories, offices, institutions and cooperatives to provide protected work departments or jobs within a certain period.

The local councils are also urged to investigate for themselves whether seriously handicapped citizens and their families are in need of further support or more suitable accommodation. In individual cases, depending on the social situation, rent rebates and other financial benefits can be granted, such as for structural alterations to homes, technical aids or other technical consumer goods which make life easier for the handicapped and their families. Special medical care is guaranteed by registering the handicapped

for a scheme of regular visits to the doctor and giving them priority in outpatient departments so that they can consult a specialist quickly if necessary. Handicapped citizens and others in need of permanent care are also admitted temporarily into hospitals and homes to enable their relatives to take a holiday or rest cure.

Security in old age

Particular attention is paid to providing effective security and protection for elderly citizens. This is not simply a question of pensions, although, of course, these are part of material security in old age, but rather of enabling the elderly to feel secure and wanted, giving them the chance to carry on with their professional or social activities, either fully or partially, if they should so wish, helping them with many everyday problems, and providing suitable living conditions and effective medical and all-round social care.

Looking after its senior citizens is a constant concern of the working-class party, the Confederation of Free German Trade Unions and the government of the GDR. This is how we express society's acknowledgement and gratitude for their contribution to country's development. All-round social care for our working veterans is therefore the common task and responsibility of state authorities, social organizations, firms, families and each individual citizen.

The right to work is still guaranteed in old age for those citizens who want to work and who are able to do so. This provides later life with a richer meaning and content. The GDR's Labour Code commits firms to providing jobs for employees of pensionable age. The firm must also help anyone who, for reasons of age, wants to change jobs. About a fifth of the GDR's pensioners are still working. Apart from their full pension, which they must by law be paid, they are paid the same wages for their work as younger employees would be. Nothing is deducted for national insurance.

Even when pensioners leave their work, close links are maintained between them and their old firms. The firms involve their veterans in their cultural and intellectual life and all social facilities are open to them. Pensioners can use the firm's health facilities and eat in the canteen, and they are taken into account when holiday places are allocated. Often the firms renovate their flats free of charge.

Increasing the number of flats suitable for old people, by either building or converting, helps comply with their wishes for a home of their own. At the same time, steps are being taken to meet the growing demand for places in homes for the elderly and nursing homes. Even though the number of places was increased between 1960 and 1976 from 89,000 in 1,150 homes to 108,000 in 1,270 homes, waiting lists still cannot be avoided. For this reason another 30,000 places in homes for the elderly and another 11,000 in residential homes are to be provided in the period 1976-1980. Homes for the elderly cost relatively little: 90 marks a month (105.40 marks in Berlin) for full board and lodging, cultural and other activities and contact with other people. A place in a nursing home costs 105 marks a month (136.40 marks in Berlin). The state is constantly increasing its subsidies for building and maintaining these homes. Social organizations such as the **Volkssolidarität** do a considerable amount of work to help old people feel secure and comfortable. This includes organizing the home help service. In 1976, 38,000 home helps came to the assistance of 60,000 elderly and sick people living in their own flats, putting in a total of over 25 million hours' work. Senior citizens can enjoy a hot midday meal in factories, clubs and **Volkssolidarität** centres. Here they can also find variety and entertainment, as the programme covers everything from lectures and concerts to joint Christmas celebrations and excursions.

National insurance pensions

The basic right of every citizen to social care in old age, laid down in the Constitution of the GDR, is materially insured by means of national insurance pensions. In return for pen-

sioners' work in the past, they guarantee an income in the form of a pension and make sure that they also reap the benefits of the country's constantly growing prosperity. For example, ever since the GDR was founded it has had a policy of putting up pensions.

Until now there have been ten pension increases, that of 1st September 1972, being the largest. Pensions and supplementary benefits for 3.9 million citizens then went up on average by 45 marks, and in many cases by much more. In more recent years, too, various social welfare measures have been introduced to improve the standard of living of the elderly. In 1976, the minimum pensions for 3.4 million citizens were increased by another 40 marks. There were also increases in benefits for people in need of permanent care, for people with little or no sight and for children needing special care, as well as in the supplement for pensioners whose spouses do not qualify for an independent national insurance pension as a result of not having worked. In 1977 the state paid 11,200 million marks for pensions, i.e. 5,400 million marks more than in 1967. 20 per cent of the GDR's population are retirement pensioners.

What kinds of pensions are paid?

Women over 60 and men over 65 who have worked and paid insurance for at least 15 years qualify for a pension. For women who have had three or more children or who have been temporarily prevented from carrying on with full-time employment by a dependent in need of permanent care, this minimum qualification is reduced.

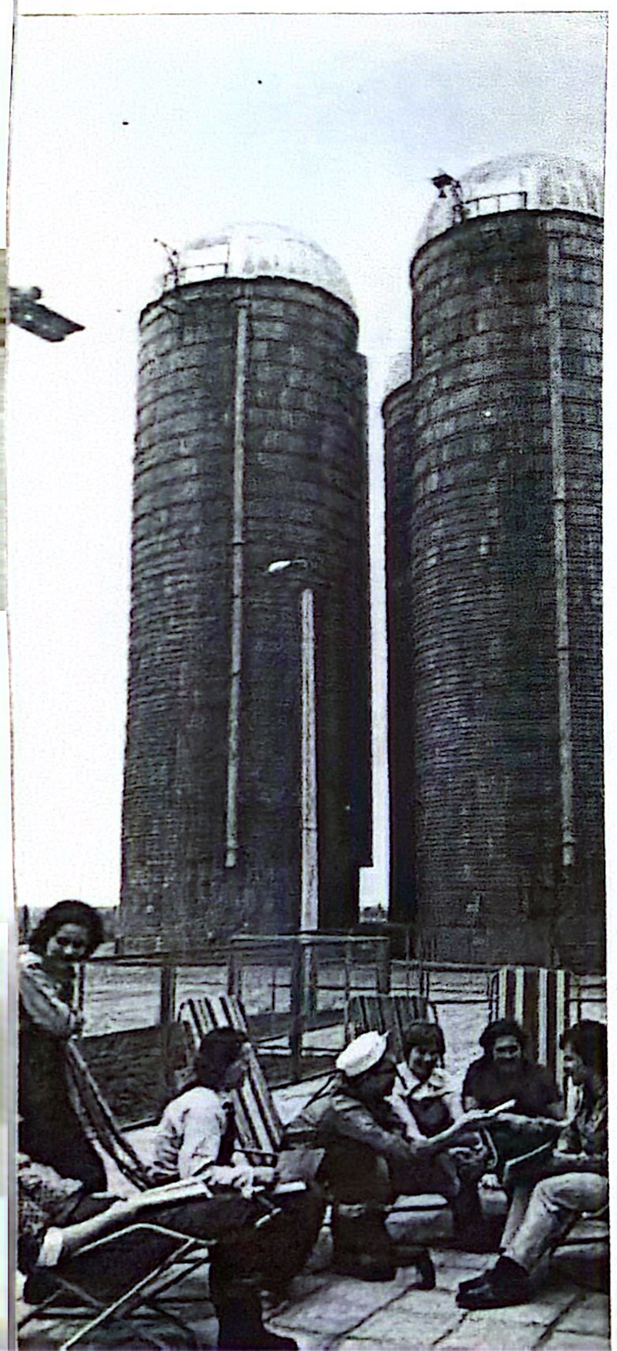
- There is a state-guaranteed minimum pension of 230 marks a month. This is paid to
  - —retirement and disability pensioners who have worked less than 15 years;
  - —women who have not worked but have given birth to five or more children, in so far as they do not qualify for any

Sibylle Heyten (left) is a country doctor in Rietschen. Here she is checking on industrial safety in the village's agricultural cooperative (left).
These shipbuilders in the nationally-owned yard at Stralsund have got their minds and hands on the job. They make suggestions for improving and facilitating the work, and industrial safety is one of their priorities.

All kinds of provisions are made for employees by their firms. These include sporting arrangements like this sport festival organized by the pipe construction plant in Ludwigsfelde (centre left).
This new supermarket in the Cottbus textile combine is an illustration of the constant improvements in conditions for the employees (centre right).

With the help of National Prize winner Prof. Gerhard Stengel (2nd from right), the members of this painting and drawing club in the Sachsenwerk electronics plant are preparing for the biennial GDR Workers' Festival (below).
This plastics machinery works in Schwerin also exports to other CMEA countries (above right). Its extensive training centre includes not only classrooms, workshops and sports facilities but also general social amenities such as this canteen (below right).

In agriculture, too, difficult physical work is being replaced to a large extent by machines and automatized apparatus. This represents another step towards overcoming the differences in living conditions between town and country (above).



Cooperative farmers in Staven near Neubrandenburg taking a break under the silos (left).

other pension, from the age of 60 or when certified as disabled;
— people over 18 prevented from working by disability.

The average retirement pension paid to men under the national insurance scheme was 360 marks a month in 1976.

● Retirement pensions are calculated in the following way: there is a basic payment of 110 marks to which is added a set sum for each year of employment that the pensioner was paying national insurance contributions, as well as for each imputed year (years of unemployment before 1945, and in the case of women an extra year for each child born).

If we apply the current rates of payment to Herr Schneider, who has been working continuously since 1946 (short periods of illness apart), and who will doubtless carry on working until he is 65, we get the following result:

Basic contribution	110 marks
48 working years = 48 per cent of monthly average income on which national insurance contributions were due	280 marks
Benefits resulting from membership of the voluntary supplementary insurance scheme	250 marks
Total monthly pension	640 marks

But Herr Schneider's actual standard of living in old age will not be measured just by his 640 marks pension. It will also be considerably determined by other social benefits such as low rents and fuel costs, low stable prices for essential foods, free medical care, and the low cost of places in nursing homes and homes for the elderly. In general there are certain supplementary allowances, too.

● An allowance of 100 marks a month if the spouse does not receive an independent pension and if certain other con-

ditions are met. A child allowance of 45 marks a month for children and adopted children, which is usually paid until the child's 16th birthday or the end of schooling or study. If both parents receive a pension, then both are entitled to the child allowance.

● Permanent care allowances are added to pensions from national insurance funds if a pensioner is not working and needs the full-time attention of another person as the result of an illness or disability which cannot be cured in the foreseeable future. The maximum is 80 marks a month. Blind people receive an extra benefit ranging from 30 to 210 marks a month. Seriously disabled citizens receive a special care allowance of 120 to 180 marks a month.

● Disability pensions are paid where disability has been certified and certain stipulations relating to national insurance contributions have been met. It is calculated according to the same principles as the retirement pension. If a doctor's certificate is presented testifying to 66 $^{2}/_{3}$ per cent physical disability which began during participation in the fascist German army or captivity as a prisoner of war, as a result of illness or some other cause, then the claimant is entitled to a war injuries pension worth 300 marks a month.

● If an insurant dies while entitled to retirement, disability or war injuries pension, the dependents are eligible for widows' or orphans' pensions.

● An insurant suffering permanent damage as the result of an accident at work or an occupational disease is entitled to an accident pension. 100 per cent disability is compensated by a pension worth two thirds the average monthly income on which insurance was payable, and in less serious cases the pension is reduced according to scale. If the insurant dies as the result of an accident, then any dependents can claim the corresponding widows' and orphans' accident pension.

● After a certain minimum employment and membership of the miners' insurance scheme, miners and their widows and orphans are eligible for miners' pensions paid out by the national insurance scheme. Their value is greater than the

normal retirement and other pensions. This is out of consideration for the difficult conditions in which they work. Other preferential pensions apply to victims of the fascist regime, people persecuted by the Nazis, together with their living dependents, certain scientists and intellectuals, railway employees, post office workers, health and social workers and members of the GDR's armed forces and customs department.

Apart from this, all pensioners are entitled to a number of other privileges. They can get reductions on tickets to cultural and sporting events, along with any person they bring with them for help, and discounts on bus and train fares, or even free travel. Blind people do not have to pay for their radio licences and can send up to 7 kilograms of material for the blind by post without charge. They are also relieved of basic telephone rent, and half the installation charges can also be waived.

This all goes to show that nobody needs to be left on their own in a socialist country. Society does all it can so that the elderly and infirm can also lead a full, harmonious life.

*

A lot could be added, a lot still needs to be said if our description of measures which guarantee security for the citizens of our socialist state is to be in any way complete.

We have put the emphasis here on employment and health protection, on concern for mothers and children, assistance to working women, the care of children and young people, aid to the infirm and, last but not least, the measures to protect citizens from dismissal and the rights of the trade unions.

We wanted to make it clear that individual well-being is the top priority in the GDR. Nobody needs to be alone with their worries and cares because they "can't afford" help. For most

of our citizens it is a matter of course to give support to the elderly, the sick, and other people in need of assistance. This illustrates the fact that overcoming basic social antagonisms, and above all exploitation, removes the barriers to social understanding. Building socialist society was the chance for humanity to start influencing everyday life.

From the SED Programme adopted at the 9th Congress in Berlin, May 1976

The economic and social policies of the Socialist Unity Party of Germany are a major factor in bringing the various classes and sections of society still closer together, in reducing substantial distinctions between physical and mental labour and bridging the gap between living conditions in town and country. The application of the principle of reward according to merit is combined with the gradual obliteration of social distinctions.

The housing programme now in progress is the lynchpin of the SED's social policy. Its aim is to solve the housing question by 1990. A long-standing objective of the revolutionary working-class movement will thus be accomplished. The provision of new housing will have a growing effect on the general standard of housing, on meaningful leisure pursuits and human relations. Housing construction goes hand in hand with the provision of efficient transport, catering and welfare services.

In conformity with the development of the national economy, the purpose of the incomes policy pursued is to enable working people to earn more by increasing their output or raising the standard of their work. The share of the national income accruing to the working class will continue to grow to reflect its rising level of performance, role and responsibility.

Public funds assume growing importance for the development of real income. They will increase at a faster rate than wage and bonus funds and will be chiefly used to develop health and social services, education, culture and sport.

Depending on the growth of labour productivity, the Party is seeking a further differentiated prolongation of annual holiday leave and the gradual introduction of a 40-hour week by shortening daily working hours while retaining the five-day week. Simultaneously, the efficient organization of catering and other services will add to the working people's leisure time.

The Socialist Unity Party of Germany shows special concern for the promotion of the family, the well-being of mother and child and assistance for large families and young married couples. Financial burdens arising from the birth, care and upbringing of children will, to an increasing extent, be recognized and borne by the whole community. Families with several children will be given further assistance. Opportunities for mothers of small children and those of school age to pursue a job will be improved systematically.

Care when aged, ill or disabled will be systematically improved following on from the growth in the economy.

Cultural, social and medical services for those who retire from employment and for all senior citizens are a major concern of the Socialist Unity Party of Germany. They are constantly being expanded and improved. Living conditions for the retired population will be further improved in a systematic manner. A variety of measures will be taken to enable the elderly to participate more actively in society. The provision of jobs to suit the needs of senior citizens will be stepped up in line with their wishes and abilities. More housing adjusted to the needs of the elderly as well as residential homes, homes for the aged and nursing homes will be provided.

Citizens who are physically or mentally handicapped are to be assisted to take part in the life of society through a complex of rehabilitation measures, through the provision of appropriate education and employment opportunities, and through medical and social care.

From the Constitution of the GDR

Article 24

(1) Every citizen of the German Democratic Republic has the right to work. He has the right to employment and its free selection in accordance with social requirements and personal qualifications. He has the right to pay according to the quality and quantity of his work. Men and women, adults and young people have the right to equal pay for equal work output.

Article 34

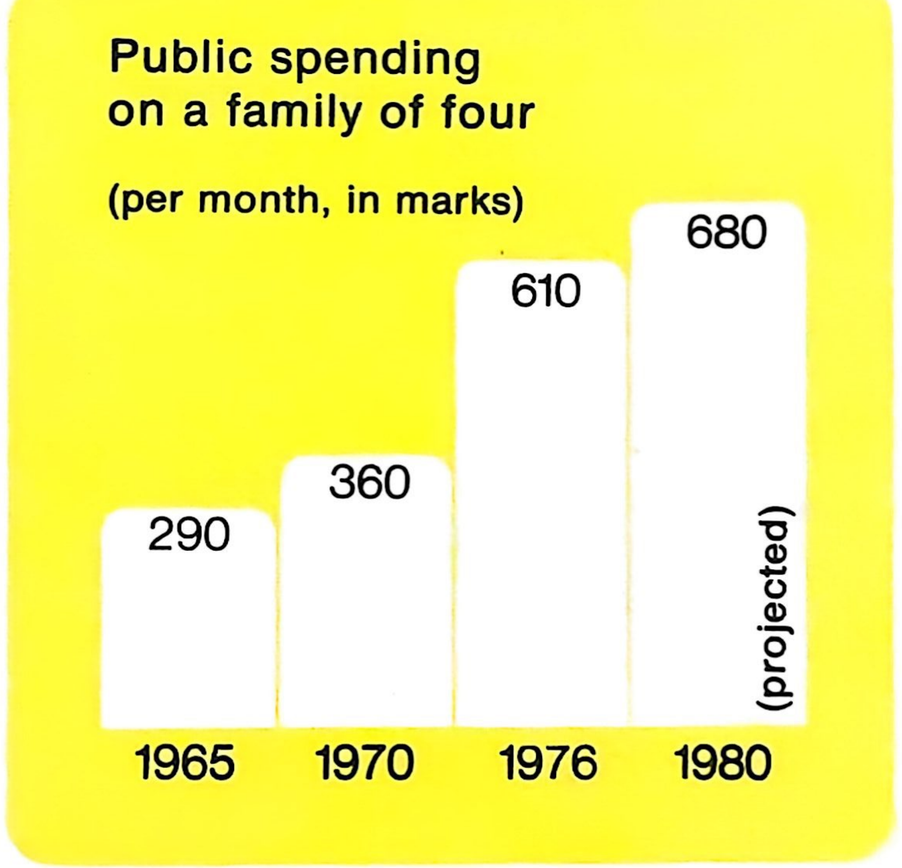
(1) Every citizen of the German Democratic Republic has the right to leisure time and recreation.

Article 35

(1) Every citizen of the German Democratic Republic has the right to the protection of his health and working capacity.

Article 36

(1) Every citizen of the German Democratic Republic has the right to social care in case of old age and invalidity.



Documentation

Article 38

(1) Marriage, family and motherhood are under the special protection of the state.

Every citizen of the German Democratic Republic has the right to respect for, protection, and promotion of his marriage and family.

From the Labour Code of the GDR of 16th June 1977

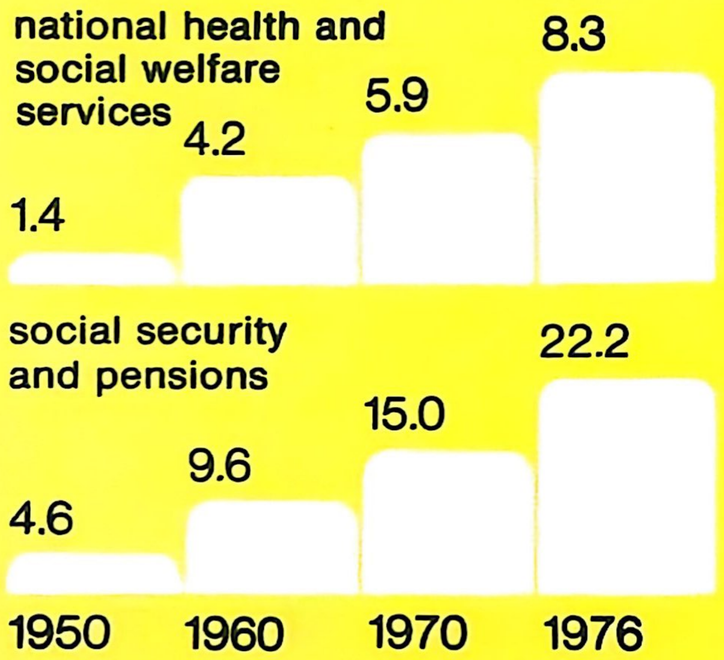
§ 2 (1) The Labour Code guarantees that all citizens who so wish and decide should be able to participate at all times in the social work process, according to social requirements and individual qualifications. This Code has as its aim the development and rational use of social work potential, the fostering of creativity and initiative and the creation of working conditions which promote work satisfaction and constructive willingness among employees and enable them to achieve high performances for the benefit of each individual and of socialist society as a whole.

(2) The Labour Code guarantees the right of working people to participate in determining political, economic, social and cultural life in their place of work and to take an increasingly more comprehensive and informed part in management and planning, particularly through the trade unions and their different forms of organization.

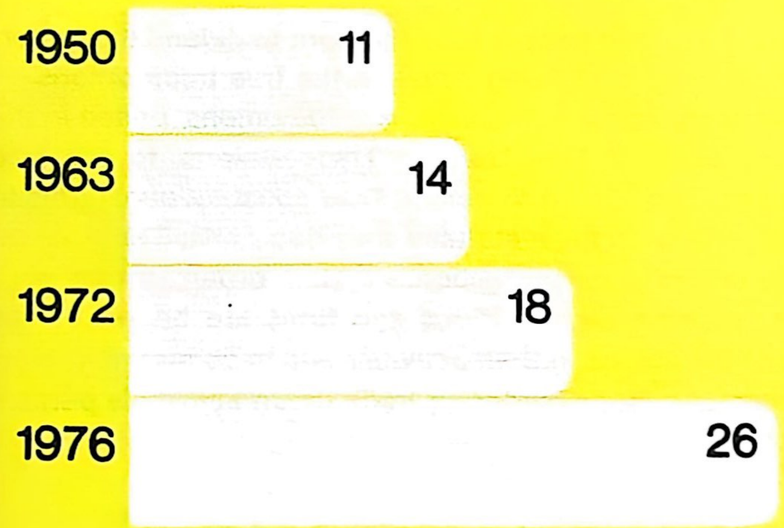
(3) The Labour Code is a contribution to the consistent application of the principle: "From each according to his abilities, to each according to his work." It ensures that employees are paid according to the quality and quantity of their work and that both men and women, adults and young people receive equal pay for equal work.

(4) It is the objective of the Labour Code systematically to improve workplace conditions for employees, particularly by raising the standard of protection of health and working capacity, expanding social and medical care and cultural

Public expenditure on social benefits (in million marks)



Paid maternity leave



(in weeks)

Documentation

activities, and broadening the opportunities for working people to spend their leisure time creatively and to enjoy relaxing holidays. It guarantees material provision for employees in illness, disability and old age.
(5) The Labour Code promotes the all-round development of socialist personality and of attitudes and behaviour corresponding to a socialist way of life in the firm and workteams as collective organizations. It provides a stimulus for people to work conscientiously and honestly, exercising their responsibilities to the full, protecting and creating socialist property, and being guided more and more in their personal relationships in the collective by mutual respect and support, comradely help and consideration. Every working person has the duty to maintain socialist work discipline conscientiously.

§ 3 The socialist state guarantees that conditions should be created everywhere which enable women to take increasing advantage of their equal status at work and in vocational training and to combine their work even more successfully with their duties as mothers and in the family. The Labour Code contributes to the systematic improvement of women's workplace conditions. It ensures special assistance to and protection of women entering and pursuing employment as well as material support for mothers.

§ 6 (1) All working people have the right to defend their interests by joining and being active in the free trade unions.
(2) The socialist state enables the trade unions, united in the Confederation of Free German Trade Unions, to organize freely and unhindered to defend their constitutional rights in accordance with their statutes and decisions. Trade union activity enjoys state protection. All state organizations, economic planning organizations and firms are bound by law to assist the unions in their activities and to cooperate closely with them. Anybody hindering trade union activity is punishable by law.

§ 201 (1) All employing organizations are bound by law to ensure the protection of their employees' health and labour power, above all by creating and maintaining safe, pleasant working conditions and conditions which promote health and

work potential. The director and managerial staff are obliged to implement the stipulations relating to health protection and industrial safety and to fire prevention as part of planning and directing the reproduction process. In this they are to encourage the active participation of employees.

§ 223 (1) In order to put into practice the right to cultural life, physical exercise and sport, firms are obliged

a) to support employees in their cultural and sporting activities, their philosophic, economic and aesthetic education and the development of the intellectual and cultural movement which is building socialist attitudes to work, learning and life,
b) to assist factory and house trade union committees and collectives in raising the standards of cultural and intellectual life, and to create all possible conditions for stimulating employees' cultural creativity,
c) to sponsor regular sporting activities for employees and to support local organizations of the German Gymnastics and Sports Federation of the GDR, particularly the sports club within the firm, in fulfilling their tasks,
d) to create, with the help of youth initiatives, conditions for young people to engage in a wide variety of cultural, sporting and touristic activities, with the particular aim of assisting the youth collectives to organize opportunities for constructive leisure activity.

Fact and figures

Homes built in the GDR

Period	Homes built	Better housing conditions for:
1966—1970	365,000	1.0 million citizens
1971—1975	609,000	1.8 million citizens
1976—1980	750,000	2.2 million citizens

Percentage of households with quality consumer goods

	1960	1965	1970	1976
Radios	90	87	92	97
Television sets	17	49	69	84
Refrigerators	6	26	56	90
Washing machines	6	28	54	76
Family cars	3	8	16	29

Index of retail prices, costs of services and transport for industrial and white-collar workers' families
(1970 = 100)

1955	1960	1965	1970	1976
116.0	101.6	101.9	100	96.6

Index of average monthly income
(1976 = 100)

1955	1960	1965	1970	1976
57	74	84	100	123

Average monthly net income of a household of four people
(in marks)

1960	1965	1970	1976
913	1,000	1,209	1;556

Total national value of savings accounts
(in millions of marks)

1950	1960	1970	1976
1,300	17,500	52,100	80,200

Qualification level of the working population (percentage)

	1955	1964	1970	1976	1980 (planned)
University or college degree	4.4	7.4	12.5	14.2	18
Skilled worker's or master's diploma	25.6	45.6	48.5	63.1	66
Semi- or unskilled	70.0	47.0	39.0	22.7	16

Receipts and payments of the national insurance scheme
(in millions of marks)

	1960	1965	1970	1976
Income from contributions	6,737	7,015	7,950	10,558
State subsidy	1,297	2,532	4,237	7,940
Payments	8,034	9,547	12,187	18,498

National insurance payments for medicines and medical aids (in millions of marks)

	1971	1974	1976
Visual aids	34.6	45.5	105.7
Hearing aids	2.7	7.5	13.5
Orthopaedic shoes	20.5	22.9	26.4
Invalid chairs	1.3	7.6	9.3
Artificial limbs	9.2	9.4	12.4

Medical centres in the GDR

	1965	1970	1976
Health centres	412	452	534
Outpatient departments	855	828	947
State-sponsored medical practices	787	1,301	1,622
State-sponsored dental practices	485	680	998
Visiting nurses' posts	4,807	4,716	5,146
Cancer and tumour treatment centres	197	200	208
Duty doctors	1,866	2,067	2,084
Duty nurses	1,478	1,323	1,291

Doctors and dentists

	1950	1960	1970	1976
No. of doctors	13,268	14,555	27,255	32,097
per 10,000 population	7.2	8.5	16.0	19.1
No. of dentists	7,176	6,361	7,349	8,108
per 10,000 population	3.9	3.7	4.3	4.8

Decrease in infant mortality (per 100 live births)

1950	1960	1970	1976
7.2	3.9	1.9	1.4

State birth allowances (in marks)

	1st child	2nd child	3rd child	4th child	5th or subsequent child
1950	—	—	100	250	500
1960	500	600	700	850	1,000
1972	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000

State subsidies for pregnancy and maternity allowances (in millions of marks)

1971	1974	1976
232	274	398

Average subsidy per woman (in marks)

1971	1974	1976
1,356	1,934	2,509

Pre-school child care (per 1,000 children)

	1950	1960	1970	1977
In kindergartens	205	461	645	874
In creches	13	143	291	570

Provisions for schoolchildren (percentage)

	1971	1977
School meals	50	73
School milk	26	62

Holidays (in millions)

	1960	1970	1977
FDGB holiday service	1.0	1.1	1.6
Firm organized	1.0	1.2	1.5

Documentation

Prescribed cure holidays (in thousands)

	1960	1965	1970	1976
Curative or convalescent	208	217	214	221
Prophylactic	121	119	106	125

Social welfare homes

	1960	1970	1976
Nursing homes, homes for elderly	1,151	1,206	1,270
places (in thousands)	89	96	108
Residential homes for senior citizens	36	57	119
places (in thousands)	2	3	9

Increase in life expectancy (in years)

	1952	1960	1965	1970	1976
Male	64	66	68	68	69
Female	68	71	73	73	74

Other titles in this series:

What is life like in the GDR
Socialist economy — aim and strategy
Youth at work, at leisure and in politics
Work in a nationally-owned factory
Education in a socialist country
Socialist economic integration for the well-being of man
Science and society
Women and socialism
How do we protect our environment?
How we look after health
Sport and physical culture in the GDR
Socialism: Making culture a way of life
Christians and churches in the GDR
How do farmers live and work in the GDR?
Freedom, democracy, human rights — for whom and for what?
Political détente and the arms race
Law and justice in a socialist society
Policies which put people first
Vocational training for today and tomorrow
Continued peace is vital — what is to be done?
Fun — Health — Fitness